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MOROCCO: Loyal forces have restored order, but the death of Morocco's military strongman, Major General Mohamed Oufkir, will increase the tension and instability caused by the attempt on King Hassan's life.

Oufkir directed loyal forces in the initial counterattack, but [redacted]

[redacted] he took his own life several hours later, reportedly out of remorse for having failed to prevent this latest attack on the King. So far, independent sources have been unable to confirm that Oufkir did commit suicide, and his death has inspired speculation concerning his possible complicity in the attempted assassination. [redacted]

[redacted] Moroccan officials received a confession from Lieutenant Colonel Amekrane, a principal rebel officer seized in Gibraltar, implicating Oufkir in the assassination plot. Oufkir may have shot himself when he realized the coup had failed and his fellow conspirators had been captured. Amekrane's alleged confession also introduces the possibility that loyal officials executed Oufkir during the roundup of suspected rebels.]

Whatever Oufkir's role, his death and the air force attack on the King will have serious repercussions in the military establishment, which has never fully recovered from the army uprising in July 1971. Major General Driss Ben Aomar has been named acting defense minister. He is a loyal and respected army officer, but he lacks Oufkir's drive and formidable reputation. The 55-year-old Driss Ben Aomar has serious health problems and is probably not capable of carrying through forcefully with Oufkir's massive military reorganization.

The assassination attempt is another demonstration of the continuing discontent with King Hassan. As was the case in the July 1971 coup attempt, most of the rebel officers are Berbers, who resent the predominantly Arabized political and social elite in Morocco. There is also deep-seated dislike among many educated Moroccans for the King, his sumptuous life style, and his autocratic rule. Hassan's position depends almost entirely on the support of the military and security forces, and the future of the monarchy is now more than ever in jeopardy. [redacted]

[UN-DISARMAMENT: A Soviet initiative at the forthcoming General Assembly for a World Disarmament Conference (WDC) may benefit from renewed third world pressure.]

The deputy director of the UN Disarmament Division recently expressed the view that unless the US or China strongly opposes the Soviet proposal, the momentum which began at last year's General Assembly cannot be stopped. He predicted that third world leaders would help in formulating a proposal acceptable to the Chinese and that the assembly will at least establish a preparatory body for a WDC.

The Chinese, while hoping to maintain enough flexibility to avoid appearing the primary opponent of a WDC, have not changed their opposition to participation in disarmament talks. Chinese officials have told Pakistani representatives in Peking and Geneva that a WDC could be profitable only if items China considers basic to the political situation--such as a pledge of non-first-use of nuclear weapons and security assurances to non-nuclear states--are given priority. The Chinese threw cold water on the whole idea of a conference by remarking that the political environment is not suitable at this time for disarmament negotiations of any sort since political problems and the basic relationships between the major powers must be defined and settled as a prerequisite to any meaningful disarmament talks. The Chinese undoubtedly realize that such conditions are unlikely to be met by the major powers. Peking is determined to develop its nuclear strength. Moreover, Soviet sponsorship of a WDC would be enough to ensure Chinese opposition.

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Meanwhile, an Italian representative in New York has said that his government will endorse the Soviet proposal for a WDC because Italian views on this topic are similar to the Soviet Union's.

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